interconnection is a continuous process. BSNL provides interconnection based on technical feasibility as per time frame stipulated in the interconnection agreement between BSNL and Private Operators. Interconnection agreements also provide for mutually agreed special arrangements for expansion of BSNL switches, wherever BSNL is unable to provide interconnection. For such locations, if any cellular operator wants special arrangements, BSNL can take necessary action.

Quality of service provided by cellular operators

106. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD:
SHRI C. PERUMAL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) had set a deadline of December 31, 2005 for cellular operators to meet the Quality of Service (QoS) norms;

(b) whether some cellular operators have failed to meet the deadline;

(c) if so, the action taken against those operators;

(d) whether the bench-mark for inter-network congestion level has been set by TRAI at less than 0.5 per cent;

(e) whether TRAI has found congestion levels at inter-network level was more than 10 per cent i.e. 20 times worse than the bench-mark level at more than 125 places; and

(f) whether cellular operators have complained about the poor interconnection between them and the MTNL/BSNL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As per the Performance Monitoring Report of the operators for the quarter ending December 2005, some of the bench-marks specified in Quality of Service (QoS) regulations of Telecom Regulatory

Authority of India (TRAI) are not being met by most of the operators. Necessary remedial action is being worked out by TRAI.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As per the Point of Inter-connection (POI) congestion report for the month of December 2005 submitted by the Cellular Mobile Operators to TRAI, the level of POI congestion at 190 POIs was more than 10%.

(f) Yes, Sir.

Public telephones in villages

107. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRI B. J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to provide Rs. 451 crores to set up public telephones in large number of villages in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the villages in Gujarat, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh where this telephony facility would be provided under the above plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund has entered into agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November, 2004 to provide Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in remaining 66,822 eligible unconnected villages by November, 2007. This excludes villages having less than 100 population and villages lying in thick forest area/ naxalite infested area etc.

Subsidy support is being provided for these VPTs towards capital and operational expenses. 17,182 VPTs out of 66,822 have been provided as on 31.12.2005.